

System Configuration Team (SCT)

Meeting Notes March 18, 2004

Greetings and Introductions.

The March 18 meeting of the System Configuration Team was held at the National Marine Fisheries Service offices in Portland, Oregon. The meeting was chaired by Bill Hevlin of NMFS. The agenda and a list of attendees for the meeting are attached as Enclosures A and B. Silverberg led a round of introductions and a review of the agenda.

The following is a distillation (not a verbatim transcript) of items discussed at the meeting, together with actions taken on those items. Please note that some enclosures referenced may be too lengthy to routinely include with the meeting notes; copies of all enclosures referred to in the minutes are available upon request from Kathy Ceballos of NMFS at 503/230-5420.

David Wills noted that the Fish and Wildlife Service will be unable to send or receive email for at least the immediate future, due to an ongoing lawsuit. Hevlin distributed copies of the agenda for the March 23 McNary modernization meeting in Portland; Ron Boyce noted that this is a very important meeting, because it will be the main opportunity for the states and tribes to provide input on the biological monitoring plan the Corps has been directed to develop to allow McNary turbine units to be operated outside of 1% peak efficiency.

2. Portland District FFDRWG Progress Update.

Rock Peters provided a report on the February 3 Portland District FFDRWG meeting. The main topics discussed at this meeting included the following:

- Turbine survival program ('04 work plan distributed, discussed bio-index testing)
- B2 corner collector (three main issues still under discussion: hatch covers, 24-inch pipe protection and downstream struts; was operational for Spring Creek release)
- B2 JBS follow-on (air burst system being installed, NMFS is concerned about fish delay, possible debris buildup assessment, completion of flume ovality survey)
- B2 FGE (evaluating gap loss in '04 in units 15 & 17, FGE estimates for units 11, 12 and 17, VBS complete in mid-December, monitoring plans)
- Bonneville survival program (study design includes one spring treatment, need decision on adding steelhead, hydroacoustic equipment is being installed, discussion of two-

- treatment summer test)
- The Dalles survival program (discussed FPE and survival test for FY'04, Hi-Z and radio-tracking test for spring and summer, adding a sluiceway hose release to develop methodology to evaluate absolute survival)
- The Dalles spillway improvement study (on track for '04 spillway training wall construction, current completion date March 30, tentative start date for the spillway survival evaluation is April 20)
- The Dalles forebay guidance (COE is forming a team to get started on this action)
- The Dalles configuration study (COE held a kickoff meeting on March 6-7 to identify alternatives, next step is to select alternatives to carry forward, identify evaluation criteria and develop evaluation framework)
- John Day ESBS (unit 7 is now running with new VBS and ESBS, VBS screen material changed to Hendrix screen, biological evaluation for fish survival and condition will happen in 2004)
- John Day survival (studies not moving forward in 2004)
- Adult studies (test setup underway for 2004; the sturgeon study at The dalles is moving forward this spring).

Peters noted that the Corps requested, but did not receive, comments on a one-pager on the summer spill evaluation, which was not ranked in 2003. The idea is to develop a methodology for evaluating the impacts of spill on survival during July and August, he explained. The Corps has decided to go to a solicitation for proposal on this one-pager, he said; I expect to receive that proposal within two weeks, said Peters. We will distribute that proposal for regional review once it is received, he added.

Peters said he and Marvin Shutters have been discussing the schedule for one-pager review; it is now scheduled for May 27 in Portland. The next Portland District FFDRWG meeting is set for May 13, beginning at 9 a.m.

3. Walla Walla District FFDRWG Progress Update.

Marvin Shutters provided an overview of the most recent Walla Walla District FFDRWG information, touching on the following major topics:

- McNary spillway gates – bid protest regarding the contract for this work resulted in stop-work order; contractor will likely not be able to start work until June, so it may be deferred until fall, to be completed next spring. One of the new gantry crane lifting beams will be delivered on time.
- Lower Granite juvenile bypass facilities – will likely start design for this project in FY'05; to include full-flow bypass with PIT-tag detector and high-velocity separator
- Low PIT-tag detection in the north ladder at McNary – needs to be resolved through additional detection equipment; may be funds available from BPA to purchase antennas this year, if Corps can complete scoping in time. The Corps has found the necessary funding for the scoping work and it is moving forward.
- Location of next RSW – have begun discussions on which project makes the most sense

- for RSW construction – Little Goose or Lower Monumental (or possibly John Day or The Dalles?). Has requested information, comments, ideas and positions on this question by March 22. A conference call to discuss those comments is scheduled for April 5, leading to a decision about whether to stop design work on the Lower Monumental RSW in favor of another dam. John Kranda noted that it may be possible to work on more than one RSW simultaneously, if that is where the SCT wants to concentrate CRFM resources
- Lower Granite RSW operation – what should the Lower Granite spill operation be outside the study period? FFDRWG discussed this item briefly before passing it off to FPOM and TMT. Ron Boyce noted that TMT discussed this issue briefly at its meeting yesterday and will re-engage on the question of the most appropriate Lower Granite spill/RSW operation outside the test period at the March 31 TMT meeting.

4. Next Spillway for an RSW?

This topic was discussed during the previous agenda item.

5. Review of New Multi-Year CRFM Spreadsheets/Prioritization Process for the FY'05 CRFM Program.

John Kranda distributed the most recent version of the multi-year CRFM spreadsheet, dated March 18, 2004. He noted that the spreadsheet has now been organized by dam; the projects prioritized highest for FY'04 were shaded in grey. The cost of all of the FY'05 CRFM projects identified to date is just under \$105 million; the cost of the grey-shaded high-priority items is about \$74 million. The President's budget requests \$98 million for FY'05.

Kranda then devoted a few minutes to an item-by-item review of the multi-year spreadsheet. The discussion focused mainly on the following line-items:

- Line-item 3 (Bonneville juvenile bypass studies)
- Line-item 4 (B2 FGE): information for final decision will be available in December 2004; construction of whatever permanent fix is chosen will take place in FY'06 and FY'07
- Line-item 10 (B1 DSM, monitoring and outfall): huge out-year costs – a total of \$73 million+ for FYs'06-'08
- Line-item 11 (B1 FGE)
- Line-item 13 (Bonneville adult fallback): further discussion needed
- Line-items 65, 66 and 67 (The Dalles spillway modifications, spillway/sluiceway survival studies and surface bypass/forebay passage): further discussion needed; cost estimates (\$22 million+ in FY'05) are probably too high
- New line-item for FY'05: scoping for study and design of John Day spillway or skeleton bay RSW (or possibly a corner collector-type design) – lengthy discussion of what, potentially, might be the most appropriate technology for this very large and problematic forebay
- Line-item 22 (John Day extended-length screens) – \$48.5 million cost estimate for FY'05-'08; consider other alternatives, such as JD surface bypass.

- Line-item 23 (John Day biological studies) – additional testing is needed to evaluate turbine survival, so cost estimates will change
- Combine various line-items (24, possibly 21 and 28) into a single “John Day North Shore ladder” line-item.
- Line-item 57 (McNary survival/efficiency study) – FY’05 cost estimate will likely be reduced
- Line-item 58 (McNary turbine survival above 1%) – will no longer be a CRFM item
- Line-item 64 (McNary RSW) – Oregon would like to explore expediting McNary RSW construction (currently not scheduled for completion until FY’10) – in Oregon’s view, McNary should be considered in tandem with Little Goose and Lower Monumental as potentially the next dam where RSW construction will proceed. Ken Barnhardt said he has discussed direct Bonneville funding for RSW construction with BPA policy personnel and has been rebuffed; he noted, however, that BPA might consider direct RSW construction funding as an offset for the summer spill program.
- Line-item 49 (Lower Monumental PIT-tag deflector – main transportation flume): to be discussed further at the next FFDRWG meeting
- Potential new item: Little Goose full-flow PIT detection
- Line-item 39 (Lower Granite surface bypass program) – Hevlin questioned whether the FY’05 cost estimate is too high
- Potential new line-item: Lower Granite summer RSW evaluation
- Line-item 75 (SYS: PIT-tag recovery, avian and estuary) – Peters requested that the avian component of this study be separated out into a new line-item
- Line-item 79 (SYS: adult passage AFEP inc. temp) – out-year costs to be intensively scrubbed
- Line-item 98 (estuary studies) – best available estimate of the actual survival study work

Ultimately, Kranda said he will provide a new version of the multi-year spreadsheet, reflecting the comments received at today’s meeting, prior to the April SCT meeting.

6. Next SCT Meeting Date.

The next System Configuration Team meeting was set for April 23. Meeting summary prepared by Jeff Kuechle.